

LEO. Usually. Sometimes I'd meet someone and be invited to crash.

VERA. You ever meet anyone really peculiar?

LEO. What do you mean?

VERA. I don't know, like some crackpot who wanted something weird from you, in exchange for...a place to stay or whatever.

LEO. Like...?

VERA. Like a – whaddayacallit, something sexual, or –

LEO. *What?*

VERA. I would think on the road like that, by yourself, you'd meet all kinds of people.

LEO. I did meet all kinds of people. None of them required sexual favors from me, no.

VERA. If you were a woman it would probably have been different; you probably would have run into all kinds of things like that.

LEO. I know a lot of women who travel alone, Bec has done a lot of traveling / alone –

VERA. Rebecca – well, all right, if you're built like *that*, but I mean a smaller / woman.

LEO. I find if you approach people with love and trust you can count on getting the same things back from them.

(brief pause)

VERA. What is that, Confucius, or...?

LEO. It's Leo Joseph-Connell. It's me.

VERA. I'm teasing you.

LEO. Okay.

VERA. I guess it's a sensitive subject.

LEO. Nope.

VERA. Well.

(pause)

LEO. You know anything about a climbing wall?

VERA. A what?

LEO. A climbing gym!

VERA. What's a climbing gym?

LEO. It's a – a gym. Where you climb. They have these walls
/ with –

VERA. Oh, with the funny, and you're in one of those
whadayacallit –

LEO. Harnesses.

VERA. Right, I've seen that. Where have I seen that? I saw
that and I thought what the hell is that for?

(She gets the yellow pages.)

You want to go today, is that it?

LEO. I was thinking about it. Get the old upper body back
to work.

*(Now with the yellow pages, she asks this studiously
casually, without looking at him.)*

VERA. So you think you might stay a little longer, is that it?
Would it be under...what would it be under?

(He takes the yellow pages from her, gently, and looks.)

LEO. Yellow pages. Man.

VERA. What?

LEO. Do you have a computer?

VERA. No, I – well yes, I have one, Ben and Mel got it for
me, but I'm not, whadayacallit. They were very happy
with themselves for getting it for me but they didn't
really show me what to do with it.

LEO. Mac or PC?

VERA. What?

LEO. We'll look at it later.

VERA. You know a lot about computers?

LEO. I don't like them. But I can use them.

VERA. I thought everyone your age liked them.

LEO. Micah never sent an email. His whole life. Which was
stubborn as shit, but you have to admire it.

VERA. Did he use the telephone?

LEO. Yeah, but he didn't have a cell phone. I don't have one either.

VERA. I know you don't, I've been hearing about that a lot lately.

(brief pause)

I guess what they say is all this, whatsit, technology is good for...from the standpoint of the people, or the – that you can get the propaganda to the people, the Marxist – I can't find the words, but in terms of Africa, and South America, and places where – that from the standpoint of being progressive and so on and so forth it can be a good thing.

(brief pause)

You know, there are a lot of bad things about getting old, but the worst one is not being able to find my words. I just hate not being able to find my words, I feel like an idiot half the time.

LEO. That it's democratizing.

VERA. What?

LEO. That with the internet, information is free to everyone, it um...de-commodifies knowledge. Which is power.

(He returns to his yellow page search.)

VERA. When you put it that way I think I should learn how to use the computer.

LEO. Marx is cool.

VERA. You think so?

LEO. He's all right.

VERA. Well I think so too.

LEO. When I did that semester at Evergreen I took a class on Marx. Best class I took.

VERA. What did your mother think of that?

LEO. About me studying Marx?

VERA. Yeah.

LEO. Uh, I think she was like, "How is that going to be useful to you, in the future?"

VERA. Oh, dear.

LEO. And I was like, first of all, who knows, and second, I think it's important to understand where I come from, which is where you come from, too, so I'm surprised you aren't more supportive.

VERA. (*delighted*) You said that?

LEO. I did.

VERA. And what did she say?

LEO. You know, as long as I was in college, she was happy, so I think she just shut up.

VERA. She and I don't talk about politics anymore. I always end up telling her how disappointing she was to her father, I don't mean to, somehow or other I just wind up saying it, and I only mean in terms of the political – not *generally*, but then she starts crying and going on about how she always votes democrat, as if that's...it's better we just don't talk about it.

LEO. I find that to be true about a lot of subjects with Jane.

VERA. Well, between you and me. I guess I do too.

(*A small moment of enjoying each other.*)

But she was always my favorite because she was the littlest, you know she was only two when Joe and I started carrying on together. And she's been very devoted to me, so.

LEO. Is 23rd street pretty near here?

VERA. Matter of fact you can walk there. I guess I should get you Joe's keys.

LEO. Um –

(*She doesn't hear him and exits. He prepares himself to ask for something. She reenters with keys.*)

VERA. I better show you which one does what, and you'll get it wrong the first few times anyway but you'll eventually learn.

LEO. Okay – I was wondering if you could spot me a few bucks? For climbing?

VERA. Oh. You're out of money, is that it?

LEO. At the moment the flow is low.

VERA. How much do you need?

LEO. I don't know what prices are like around here...I have to rent all the stuff, so like, fifty?

VERA. Fifty *dollars*?

LEO. That's what it would be in Seattle, so I guess...maybe a little more?

VERA. More than *fifty* dollars? To climb up a wall?

LEO. I'm expecting an influx in a couple days so I could pay / you back.

VERA. A what?

LEO. An influx! Of cash, into my account!

VERA. From where?

From your mother? She's still giving you money?

Well...

LEO. Forget it.

VERA. No, / listen –

LEO. Forget it! It's no big deal!

VERA. I'm going to show you where I keep the money, and then when you need some you can just take it and leave a note, all right? So I know how much you took and I won't worry about it.

All right?

LEO. All right.

VERA. And then maybe you can do some shopping, and get the things around the house you like to have for breakfast and so on and so forth.

LEO. Vera, I want to be really clear that I can't stay more than a couple days.

VERA. I understand.

LEO. It's great to rest up, but I need to make it back to Washington before it gets too cold, so.

VERA. You mean, on the bike?

LEO. Yup.

VERA. You're going to go all the way back west on that bike?

LEO. That's the plan.

(an uncomprehending pause)

VERA. Maybe if you called Rebecca today, she – since it was the middle of the night, she may not / have –

LEO. It's not / about –

VERA. Seeing as you came all this way to be with her –

LEO. I didn't.

I didn't come all this way to be with her.

VERA. Well I know it wasn't to be with *me*.

LEO. It was to finish something I started. Micah and I started something. I finished it. That's it. People want to make it really complicated but it's not.

(He gives her a big smile.)

VERA. If you stayed more than a couple days I wouldn't know what to say to your mother. I don't know what to say to her as it is. So we're in agreement.

I keep the money in Joe's study.

(She tries to stand, doesn't quite make it up, winds up and stands again. She makes her way out slowly. LEO stays seated. He is fending off a wave of nausea or vertigo.)

VERA. *(offstage)* You comin' or what?